

## California Department of Mental Health

### Mental Health Services Act (MHSA): FISCAL DEFINITIONS

These definitions are listed in the order in which they are activated during the MHSA funding process.

**(1) County Planning Estimates:** The amount of MHSA funds available to each county to provide MHSA services.

- County Planning Estimates are considered “committed” to counties.
- The Act requires DMH to inform counties of the amounts of MHSA funds available to them. DMH uses “County Planning Estimates” as the informing mechanism.
- These are published by DMH in an Information Notice for each MHSA component.
- DMH develops a formula, in consultation with the CA Mental Health Directors Association, to determine County Planning Estimates.

**(2) County Plan:** A document required by the Act to be submitted to DMH in order to access MHSA funds made available through County Planning Estimates.

- The County Plan describes the services proposed to be delivered and the amount of funding requested to support those services.
- The Act requires counties to submit county plans and annual updates that have been developed with local stakeholders.

**(3) Approved Funds:** The portion of a county’s Planning Estimate that DMH has approved for the county to receive to implement the county’s approved County Plan.

- Approved funds are considered “obligated” to counties.
- In the MHSA “Innovation” and “Prevention & Early Intervention” components, the Act requires the Mental Health Services Oversight & Accountability Commission to approve County Plans (and DMH is required to review and comment).

**(4) MHSA Agreement:** A document signed by DMH and a county that delineates the terms and conditions under which DMH will distribute Approved Funds to a county.

- The MHSA Agreement identifies the county’s original Planning Estimate, Approved Funds, Distributed Funds, and the remaining balance in the county’s Planning Estimate.

**(5) Distributed Funds:** The MHSA funds that DMH has distributed (disbursed) to a county, based on its approved County Plan and fully executed MHSA Agreement.

- DMH distributes 75% of Approved Funds to a county upon County Plan approval, followed by the remaining 25% once a county has submitted required fiscal reports.